

REFEREE'S REVIEW

Program:	MITIM
Student:	Artemii Ovcharenko
Title of thesis:	The role of social media marketing in adding customer value at different stages of buying process on the example of construction company YIT

Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives of the thesis. Justification of the topic choice; accuracy in defining the aim and tasks of the thesis; originality of the topic and the extent to which it was covered; alignment of the thesis' topic, aim and objectives.	<u>5</u>	4	3	2
Structure and logic of the text flow. Logic of research; full scope of the thesis; alignment of thesis' structural parts, i.e. theoretical and empirical parts.	<u>5</u>	4	3	2
Quality of analytical approach and quality of offered solution to the research objectives. Adequacy of objectives coverage; ability to formulate and convey the research problem; ability to offer options for its solution; application of the latest trends in relevant research are for the set objectives.	<u>5</u>	4	3	2
Quality of data gathering and description. Quality of selecting research tools and methods; data validity adequacy; adequacy of used data for chosen research tools and methods; completeness and relevance of the list of references.	<u>5</u>	4	3	2
Scientific aspect of the thesis. Independent scientific thinking in solving the set problem/objectives; the extent to which the student contributed to selecting and justifying the research model (conceptual and/or quantitative), developing methodology/approach to set objectives.	<u>5</u>	4	3	2
Practical/applied nature of research. Extent to which the theoretical background is related to the international or Russian managerial practice; development of applied recommendations; justification and interpretation of the empirical/applied results.	<u>5</u>	4	3	2
Quality of thesis layout. Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defense, correct layout of tables, figures, references.	<u>5</u>	4	3	2

Each item above is evaluated on the following scale, as applicable: 5 = the thesis meets all the requirements, 4 = the thesis meets almost all the requirements, 3 = a lot of the requirements are not met in the thesis, 2 = the thesis does not meet the requirements.

Additional comments:

The thesis is devoted to a very topical theme of integrating SMM and buying decision making process on example of the construction industry (YIT company). The main advantage of the thesis is the focus at the holistic customer value perspective, including various approaches to defining and measuring customer value. This approach enables the link between the tactical activities and strategic marketing perspective, creating sustainable advantage through increasing multiple aspects of perceived value and optimizing several types of customer costs.

Both theoretical analysis and empirical investigation aim to support and justify the suggested study. Theoretical analysis is well done, very thorough and well organized. Wide range of sources has been used in order to cover the topic's conceptual foundations. The overall justification of the model to be investigated in the empirical part of the research is rational and substantial.

Author is paying attention to explaining the linkage between the key concepts in the study, as well as to description of the research design. Additional data is provided by the secondary data on Russian SMM market, as well as activities by competitive construction firms.

Empirical study is well justified and executed, qualitative sample is well reported in the paper. Results of the study provide insights on the various stages of the buying process and potential implications or opportunities for YIT SMM approaches.

Potential areas of improvement could include:

- *Firstly, consideration of the innovative nature of social media for some groups of consumers, which might assume that the buying process should be adjusted in line with decision making in innovation context;*
- *Secondly, results of any qualitative study can provided more insights in case of rich presentation of the data. The difference with quantitative studies is that Author can enrich the results by presenting both the data and the findings from the data. In case of the thesis emphasis is made on presenting the findings and discussion, but the data itself is not presented in detail to enhance understanding of the “voice of customer”.*

Nevertheless, the above mentioned comments do not diminish the value of the thesis, its theoretical and empirical components.

Master thesis of Artemii Ovcharenko meets the requirements of the MITIM program, and according to the reviewer’s opinion deserves an “excellent (A)” grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

Date June, 15th



Referee: Dr., Asc. Prof. Maria M. Smirnova